

**BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AND ITS IMPACTS ON DA WAH ACTIVITIES IN
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

It is a common knowledge that throughout the history of Islam and Muslims *da'wah* have been facing numerous challenges. Consequently, at the formative stage of Islam in Makkah, the Prophet (SAW) and his exalted Companions were faced with such challenges ranging from persecutions, maltreatments, boycotts, etc. In Nigeria the outstanding activities of *da'wah* could be traced back to the time of Shaykh Usmanu b. Fodiyo whose effort transformed the whole of Hausa states from traditional practices to the practice of Sunnah. Similarly, in the course of carrying out this divine obligation the Shaykh and his lieutenants were faced with challenges especially from the Hausa ruling class. In recent time one major challenge faced by *da'wah* is *Boko Haram* insurgency. *Boko Haram* is a group of extremists who out of ignorance on Islamic teachings on the concept of knowledge proclaimed themselves as the jihadist of the 21st century. This paper centrally discusses the activities of such deviant group and its impact on *da'wah* activities in Nigerian State. The paper is divided into five parts. Part one introduces the paper, part two briefly highlights on the concept of *da'wah* and its history in Nigeria, part three is focus on the evolution of *Boko haram* insurgency in Nigeria, sequentially, part four examines the impact of *Boko haram* insurgency on *da'wah*, Finally part Five concludes the paper. The findings of the paper are that *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria has serious effects on *da'wah* activities. The methodological approach used in this paper is both descriptive and prescriptive, while the method of data collection is historical and empirical.

Key Words: *Boko Haram*, Insurgency, Impacts, *Da'wah*, Activities. Nigeria.

1.0 Introduction

Nigeria as a country had contact with religions centuries ago. Islam as the largest religion came into Nigeria between 7th and 8th century. The medium through which Islam was introduced was mainly through the activities of Muslim traders who came all the way from Middle Eastern countries for trading. Hence, the major ways through which the religion spread were mainly through trading activities. Consequently, Islamic practices were mainly based on what were imitated from the Muslim traders through interactions. This development continued till the time of Sheikh Usmanu B. Fodiyo when he and his disciples started the *da'wah* activities of calling people to the practice of Sunnah as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This revivalist movement succeeded in transforming the whole of Hausa states from their un-Islamic practices to ideal practices of Islam.

However, with the advent of colonialism in Nigeria, modern Jahiliyyah practices such as secularism; nationalism, democracy etc replaced those ideal Islamic practices. This unfortunate development created room for ignorance and relegation of Islamic law to the background eventually breeds religious extremism among people.

Moreover, with the advent of globalization the world is reduced into a global village, the doors for knowledge acquisition and information open to everyone. Perception, interpretation and analysis of religious text appear in a manner that every dick and harry can have access and is free to speak on religious issues. In the past such issues were restricted to scholars only. Religion is now discussed and argued by everyone who has access to social media and inventory of opinions, irrespective of his or her interest or aptitude in understanding the religion.

This unfortunate development has continued to surface its ugly head even at the turn of this new millennium with sectarian violence erupting from some deviant sects like *Boko Haram*. *Boko Haram* is an extremist's movement like many other terrorist groups which hide under the umbrella of religion to perpetrate its heinous tendency. *Boko Haram* wrongly states that it seeks to abolish the secular system of government. It seeks to destroy the Nigerian government and establish *Shari'ah* law in the country (IBP, 2015).

1.1 Concept of *Da'wah* and its History in Nigeria,

Da'wah (also transliterated *da'wah*); Arabic دعوه'"invitation" means the proselytizing or preaching of Islam. *Da'wah* literally means "issuing a summons" or "making an invitation", being an active participle of a verb meaning variously "to summon" or "to invite" (whose triconsonantal root is دع).

While (Racious 1) opines that, the Arabic term *da'wah* is derived from the verb (دعا) *da'aa* which means “to call; to invite; and to supplicate, i.e. to call on Allah”. It is used to refer to the act of conveying or calling people to the message of Islam. In this context it is a contraction of the phrase *ad-da'wah ilallaah* (calling to Allah). The word *da'wah* and the verb *da'a* from which it is derived have a range of meanings both in the Qur'an and in ordinary speech. (Walker 3). The classical and modern lexicographers such as (Baalbaki 5) on the other hand opines that *da'wah* encompass concepts of “summoning”, “invitation”, “convocation”, “calling”, “supplication”, “appeal”, “invocation”, “missionary activity”, “request” etc.

(Semiullah 7) corroborates the above definition by defining *da'wah* as exerting one selves to the utmost dissemination of Allah's word and to make it supreme, and to remove all the impediments in the way of its observance, be that through the tongue, pen or moral persuasion. While some scholars like Yusuf (9) views it from multi-religious perspective and defines it as to embark on public enlightenment activities that will project Islam as it truly is and how it should be practiced

2. 1 DA'WAH IN THE QUR AN

As a complete and comprehensive, theoretical and practical book that provides for all aspects of life, whether spiritual, intellectual, political, social or economic; the Qur'an establishes explains and approves Islamic acts, *da'wah* inclusive. There are a number of verses which extols this message. For example, Allah says as a command to the believers:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَحِبُّوا لِلَّهِ
وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُخْبِكُمْ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءَ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ
تُحْشَرُونَ (24)

O you, who have believed, respond to Allah and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. And know that Allah intervenes between a man and his heart and that to Him you will be gathered (Q. 8:24)

Another verse which talks about *da'wah*s where Allah mentioned two kinds of *da'wah* in the Qur'an:

أُولَئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى
الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَذَكَّرُونَ (221)

Those pagans invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites you to the paradise and to forgiveness, by His permission. And He makes clear His verses [i.e. ordinances] to the people that perhaps they may remember (Q.2:221)

Those (pagans) invite you to the fire, but Allah invites you to paradise and forgiveness. From the statement one can understand two kinds of *da'wah* vis-a-vis satanic *da'wah* and Allah's *da'wah*. Unbelievers are being invited by devils (*Satan*), to paganism while Allah himself, according to this verse, takes a leading role in inviting people to His path.

The obligation to carryout *da'wah* is contain in several verses of the glorious Qur'an. For instance, Allah commands the believers in the following statement:

وَلْمَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ
وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَايُونَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (104)

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining *Al-Ma'ruf* (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and all that Islam orders one to do and forbidding *Al-Munkar* (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful.(Q. 3:104)

According to (Khan and Al-Hilahi 19), enjoining what is right (*al-ma'ruf*) means Islamic monotheism and the entire things Islam orders one to do and forbidding what is wrong (*al-munkar*) which means polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden. (At-Tabari 20) opines that *yad,,unailalkhayr* denotes call toward Islamic monotheism and that a group within the Muslims should shoulder the responsibility of calling (*da'wah*).

Similarly, Q. 3:110 also states thus:

**كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرَجْتُ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَايُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ
بِاللَّهِ**

You are the best nation produced (as an example) for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the people of the scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient (Q 3:110)

A similar verse reads thus Says:

**قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَذْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ
أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ (108)**

Say: This is my way and I invite to Allah with certain knowledge I and whoever follows me (also must invite others to Allah with sure knowledge and I am not of the pagans and disbelievers)...(Q12: 108)

In the commentary of Khan and Al-Hilahi (24), the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) must invite others to the oneness of Allah (Islamic Monotheism) with sure knowledge.

He, Most High, instructed His Prophet (SAW) to disseminate the message of Islam as follows:

**يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ
رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ
يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْكَافِرِينَ (67)**

O Messenger, convey what was revealed from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Verily, Allah guides not the people who disbelieve (Q5: 67)

All these are clear indications that the concept of *da'wah* is mentioned in several verses in the Qur'an and it is an obligation enjoined upon Muslims of the first generation as well as the present generation. It is considered to be one of the noblest acts which attract a high reward. In this regard the Glorious Qur'an has this to say:

**قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا (5) فَلَمْ
 يَرْدُهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا (6) وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ
 لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابَعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ
 وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُّوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا
 اسْتِكْبَارًا (7) ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ حَجَارًا (8)**

He said: I have been inviting my people day and night, but my invitation increased but flight. (Q71:5–6)

In essence, the word “*da'wah*” and its derivatives are used in different contexts over a hundred times in the Qur'an. (for example, in Q2:186, Q2:221, Q3:104, Q7:193, Q10:25, Q10:106, Q12:108, Q13:36, Q14:22, Q14:44, Q16:125, Q17:52, Q21:45, Q22:67, Q23:73, Q26:72, Q27:80, Q28:87, Q35:14, Q40:10, Q40:41–43, Q41:33, Q42:15, 70:17, 71:5–8, etc.).

Historical Development of *Da'wah* in Nigeria

The first stage of *da'wah* was during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). In the first few years of his mission, the Prophet (SAW) began by calling people individually in secret. Later, the call to Islam became public. This is contained in the following Qur'an verse 74:1-2

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدْثُرُ (1) قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ (2)

After the spread of Islam among the Arabs, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) started conveying the message of Islam outside of Arabia to the surrounding nations. The Prophet (SAW) sent messages to the heads of the two super powers of that time, the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire, calling them to Islam. This followed by the periods of the rightly guided *Khalifah* (RA) and subsequently to the next generations of Muslims, down to the present age.

In Nigeria, the history of *da'wah* could be traced to the time of Sheikh Usmanu bn Fodiyo who showed his concern on the need to eradicate the widespread innovations and customs that contradicted the correct belief system of Islam and its devotional practices through preaching. The un-Islamic customs promoted among the Muslims in all facets of life were suppressed and eliminated by the Shaykh.

In his zeal to propagate Islam in its true spirit, Shaykh Usmanu travelled far and wide. Wherever Shaykh visited he stayed long enough to establish a community and always left behind some of his students and disciples to continue with the *da'wah* and teaching (Bugaje 4) thereby forming a band of callers in accordance with the commandment of Allah;

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى
الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَنَهَا يَنْهَا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ (104)

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity (Q.3:104).

Accordingly, his students and disciples were trained to continue with *da'wah* activities along the line he had set in various towns and cities of Nigeria.

EVOLUTION OF BOKO HARAM IN NIGERIA

Boko Haram is a deviant group that started its activities under the leadership of Muhammad Yusuf in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of the north-eastern state of Borno. The activities and influence of this group later spread to other north eastern states of Nigeria such as Adamawa, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, Taraba which share boundary with Borno was the state is most affected in terms. Other northwestern states like Kano, and Kaduna were also affected by the activities of this deviant group.

Describing *Boko Haram* as a "group", and using the name '*Boko Haram*' to designate them, opens up numerous challenges. Firstly, the "group" is hardly a coherent constellation of actors and events, and secondly they have rarely used the name '*Boko Haram*' to designate themselves but have used various other names, which concurrently project their self-understanding, strategy and development. The name *Boko Haram*, as it is used in this article, therefore designates both a phenomenon and a group. When looking at the history of Boko Haram, the group and affiliated groups have been known by the names: Ahlul sunna wal'jama'ah hija, Nigerian Taliban, Yusufiyya, Jama'atul Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda' Awati Wal Jihad, Yusufiyya Islamic Movement, amā'atu Anṣāril Muslimīna fī Bilādis Sūdā, Harakat al Muhajirin, al-Wilāyat al-Islāmiyya Gharb Afriqiyah,

and others. All these names have designated groups identifying themselves with or being identified as *Boko Haram*. () The Wikipedia mention that:

The group, referred to by themselves as *al-Wilāyat al-Islāmiyya Gharb Afriqiyah* (Arabic: الولایة الإسلامية غرب أفريقيا, (Islamic State West Africa Province, ISWAP), or *Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihād* (Arabic: جماعة أهل السنة للدعوة والجهاد, "Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad"), (Wekipea 3)

After the death of Muhammad Yusuf the mantle of leadership was shifted to Abubakar Shekau in 2016, who was later succeeded by Abu Musab al-Barnawi.

The ideology of *Boko Haram* originated from a particular fraternity that was built on a corrupted ideology which bluntly opposes the correct teachings of Allah's Messenger (SAW). This resembles the ideology of Khawarij. The khawarij are the ones who legalize the rebellion against the Muslim *ummah* and harbor the assumption that the entire *Ummah* are upon astray and misguidance and they are ones on the true religion and guidance (Discourse on *Boko Haram*).

In addition, they exercises a stern position on everyone who disagree with their understandings and even go to the extent of legalizing his killing, destruction of his property and reputation. This group manifested itself when a group among the Muslims rebelled against the Caliph Aliyu Bin Abi Talib after his ascension as caliph.

From March 2015 to August 2016, the group was aligned with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Since the current insurgency started in 2009 *Boko Haram* has killed tens of thousands and displaced 2.3 million from their homes and was ranked as the world's deadliest terror group by the Global Terrorism Index in 2015.

Of the 2.3 million people displaced by the conflict since May 2013, at least 250,000 have left Nigeria and fled into Cameroon, Chad or Niger. *Boko Haram* killed over 6,600 in 2014. The group have carried out mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014. Corruptions in the security services and human rights abuses committed by them have hampered efforts to counter the unrest.

The Council of Ulama advised the government and the Nigerian Television Authority not to broadcast Yusuf's preaching, but their warnings were ignored. Yusuf's arrest elevated him to hero status.

IMPACT OF *BOKO HARAM* ACTIVITIES ON *DA'WAH*

Boko Haram is the most dangerous among the deviant groups which has seriously halted the activities of *da'wah* in almost all the states in the northeast Nigeria. Their activities resemble that of khawarij, who acted beyond the boundary of Islam. The extreme ideologies is what make them to consider any group other than their own member as unbeliever and that legalizes the blood and property of people as they consider it as booty of war.

In essence, the activities of this deviant group halted the Islamic propagation (*da'wah*) especially in the northern States. Abdurahman Adamu mentioned that in the last three years Islamic propagation had virtually stopped in some areas of north eastern states simply because fear was instilled among the *duats* and they were pursued and some of them killed. Among the negative impacts of *boko haram* activities on *da'wah* are:

1. It creates insecurity: The activities of *boko haram* have really creates insecurity in Nigeria and for *da'wah* requires peaceful environment to prevail that is Allah sanction that calling to the religion of Islam is not by compulsion. This is contained in the following Qur 'an statement. **لَا إِكْرَاهٌ فِي الدِّينِ** Let there be no compulsion (or coercion) in the religion (Islam)..... (Q.2:256)

Since *da'wah* is not by force and it requires peaceful environment to prevail. That is why the Prophet SAW accepted the terms o the treaty of Hudaybiyya (to be allowed to preach without restriction) inspite a number of disadvantages attached to it.

Among the methodologies of conducting *da'wah* in Nigeria are following: open Air, *Ta alem* in the Mosque, one on one, Friday *khutbah* etc. The activities of *boko haram* have virtually halted all the avenues and methodology of *da'wah* in the area of this study. The open Air preaching organizes by Islamic organizations like *Jama atu Izalatil Bid ah Wa iqamatis-sunnah* (JIBWIS) was to suspended at a period in the history of this country because of the insecurity. Similarly, *ta alem* conducted in different mosque across the northeastern states were stopped, the tune of Friday sermon was also changed.

1. Misrepresentation of Islam through spreading wrong information about Islam and Muslims: With the development in the field of Information and Communication Technology, accesses to information have become easy to people. The *boko haram* group uses such medium to disseminate wrong information about Islam and Muslims which instills fear (Islamaphobia). For instance, Ahmed A. et-al writes as follows:

As a member of Salafist sect Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf was influenced by the radical teachings of fourteenth century scholar Ibn Taymiyyah who was well known for Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East. (Ahmed 5).

Similarly John Azuma a non-Muslim writes:

It argues that the nineteenth-century jihadist legacy of Uthman dan Fodio, and its rejection of things non-Islamic, accusations of *bid'a* and *muwālāt* and the invocation of *takfir*, continues to appeal to the present-day generation of Muslims. Abubakar Mahmud Gumi, who viewed himself as a reformer in the tradition of dan Fodio, and his Wahhabi-inspired anti-Sufi views, and the activism of the Izala movement, which is an outgrowth of Gumi's religious and ideological views, have perpetuated the separatist tradition. From limited reliable data, the article goes on to construct the rise of Boko Haram (itself an outgrowth of the Izala movement) and its ideology from within the ranks of the Salafi-Wahhabi trends in Northern Nigeria, arguing that Boko Haram, with its militancy against things non-Islamic, is firmly rooted and best explained within the broader Northern Nigerian context of Islamic factionalism and absolutism fostered by a romanticized jihadist legacy and disillusionment arising from failed experiments with Salafi-Wahhabi idealism. (John 1)

The above statement of linking the activities of *boko haram* to prominent Sunni scholars like ibn Taymiyah, Sheikh, Abubakar Mahmud Gumi or the Islamic organization is one of several misinformations about Islam and Muslims which have negative impacts on *da'wah* activities in Nigeria which spread wrong information about Islam and Muslim and addressed scholars of Islam with bad names.

2. Spreading Extremism and Ignorance among Muslims: The activities of *boko haram* in Nigeria have spread extremism among the Muslims especially the youths. In the course of carrying out their activities *boko haram* have recruited many young Muslims especially from the north eastern states of Borno,

Adamawa, Taraba etc. This pushed many among the youths to take arms against anybody that does not support their ideologies.

The ideologies of *boko haram* group are totally against the dictate of Islam. Islam encourages the acquisition and integration of knowledge in the society. Majority of scholars opines that acquisition of western education is allowed in Islam. This position was affirmed in the following statements:

It is true that the system of conventional education operated in Nigeria was introduced by the Christian missionaries and colonial masters. It is however important to note that Muslim Jurists of the classical period have tremendously contributed to different fields of what is today called western education. However, when the Europeans took over from the Muslims, they took the voluminous books written by Muslims, translated them into their languages. The Muslim Jurist themselves learned these branches of knowledge as philosophy from Greek philosopher who were non-Muslims. This same knowledge was later introduced by the Europeans to their colonies, one of which is Nigeria. (Discourse of Boko haram..19-20)

Moreover, knowledge is a wisdom that can be acquired from anybody. The tradition of Prophet (SAW) sanctions that in the following statement: "Wisdom is a lost property of a believer wherever he finds it he grasps it" (Ahmad 28). Therefore, it is not sanction on any one to ask where the knowledge comes from or initiated. The only yardstick is to measure it on the scale of the Qur'an and hadith. If it is beneficial then one can use it and if it is not the he drops it.

On one occasion the Prophet (SAW) approved receiving knowledge from Satan. This is contained in the following tradition from Abu Hurairah:

He Abu Hurairah said: Allah's Apostle deputed me to keep *Sadaqat (al-Fitr) of Ramadan*. A comer came and started taking handfuls of the foodstuff (of the *Sadaqa*) (stealthily). I took hold of him and said, "By Allah, I will take you to Allah's Apostle ." He said, "I am needy and have many dependents, and I am in great need." I released him, and in the

morning Allah's Apostle asked me, "What did your prisoner do yesterday?" I said, "O Allah's Apostle! The person complained of being needy and of having many dependents, so, I pitied him and let him go." Allah's Apostle said, "Indeed, he told you a lie and he will be coming again." I believed that he would show up again as Allah's Apostle had told me that he would return. So, I waited for him watchfully. When he (showed up and) started stealing handfuls of foodstuff, I caught hold of him again and said, "I will definitely take you to Allah's Apostle. He said, "Leave me, for I am very needy and have many dependents. I promise I will not come back again." I pitied him and let him go. In the morning Allah's Apostle asked me, "What did your prisoner do." I replied, "O Allah's Apostle! He complained of his great need and of too many dependents, so I took pity on him and set him free." Allah's Apostle said, "Verily, he told you a lie and he will return." I waited for him attentively for the third time, and when he (came and) started stealing handfuls of the foodstuff, I caught hold of him and said, "I will surely take you to Allah's Apostle as it is the third time you promise not to return, yet you break your promise and come." He said, "(Forgive me and) I will teach you some words with which Allah will benefit you." I asked, "What are they?" He replied, "Whenever you go to bed, recite "Ayat-al-Kursi"-- 'Allahu la ilaha illa huwa-l-Haiy-ul Qaiyum' till you finish the whole verse. (If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you and no satan will come near you till morning. " So, I released him. In the morning, Allah's Apostle asked, "What did your prisoner do yesterday?" I replied, "He claimed that he would teach me some words by which Allah will benefit me, so I let him go." Allah's Apostle asked, "What are they?" I replied, "He said to me, 'Whenever you go to bed, recite Ayat-al-Kursi from the beginning to the end ---- Allahu la ilaha illa huwa-lHaiy-ul-Qaiyum----.' He further said to me, '(If you do so), Allah will appoint a guard for you who will stay with you, and no satan will come near you till morning.' (Abu Huraira or another sub-narrator) added that they (the companions) were very keen to do good deeds. The Prophet said, "He really spoke the truth, although he is an absolute liar. Do you know whom you were talking to, these three nights, O Abu Huraira?" Abu Huraira said, "No." He said, "It was Satan." (Bukhari 3,505)

Additionally, the Prophet (SAW) also sent Zaid bn Thabit to learn the Jewish language. This is contained in the following tradition:

After the Prophet (SAW) came to Madinah, delegations and letters started to come from various nations, especially the Jews living around Madinah. The Prophet advised *Zayd bin Thabit, one of the revelation scribes, to learn Hebrew and Syriac* in order to understand what the delegations said and to respond to the letters. There are hadiths in hadith books like

Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud and Musnad, and siyar resources regarding the issue.

It was also reported that the Prophet (SAW) adopted a technology which originated from Persians in digging a trench as defensive mechanism during the battle of Ditch *Khandaq*.

Moreover, the weapons used by *Boko Haram* insurgent in killing people are made of Europeans. If they prohibited an education system which came from Europeans then they should completely abandoned the use of modern weapons made by Europeans.

3. Increase hatred between Muslims and Non- Muslims: Another negative impact of *Boko haram* activities to *da'wah* is that the continuous killing and perpetration of evils by the group have instill fear into the mind of people more especially the non-Muslims which eventually created a sort Islamaphobia i.e. fear of anything Islam and Muslim. That is why Muslim *du ats* are stigmatized and address with all soft of names which make it difficult for many to continue with their *da;wah* activities.

4. Arrest and Assassination of Muslims Scholars: All over the world Muslim *du at* are face with problems of arrest and sometimes assassination. This is attributed to activities deviant groups who tag themselves with Islamic identity and continued to spread corrupt ideologies among people. In Nigeria, no doubt the activities of *boko haram* especially in the last few years led to the arrest and assassination of some prominent scholars. For instance, the assassination of sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam, a prominent scholar from Kano and Shekh Albani Zaria will readily come to mind. The assassination of these prominent scholars has

negatively affected the activities of *da'wah* in Nigeria as they have millions of audience all around the world who listen and benefit from their preaching.

5. Condemning People to Hell And Mass *Takfeer* Of Muslims Without Clear

Proof: This is another ideology of *boko haram* group which has negative impact on *da'wah* in Nigeria. The habits of condemning vast number of Muslims to hell or which is call massive *takfeer* without clear evidence. Some judgments are best left for *Allah, subhanahu wata'ala* who knows what is hiding in people about their belief or unbelief.

The argument that all *bid'ah* constitute *kufr* which can take a believer out of Islam is what many scholars upon the *manhaj salaf* are purely against. Before a *bid'ah* would amount to *kufr* that can destroy the faith of a Muslim, it must relate to strong matters of '*aqeedah*' in the *Kitab wa Sunnah* that every Muslim is expected to be aware of. Sheikh Haafiz al-Hukami, said:

The kind of *bid'ah* which constitutes *kufr* is when one denies a matter on which there is scholarly consensus, which widely-known, and which no Muslim can have any excuse for not knowing, such as denying something that is obligatory, making something obligatory that is not obligatory, or making something *haram halal*, or making something *halal haram*; or believing some notion about Allah, His Messenger and His Book when they are far above that, whether in terms of denial or affirmation because that means disbelieving in the Qur'an and in the message with which Allah sent His Messenger (SAW)" (Ma'aarij al-Qubool, 2/503-504)

From the above submissions of the learned Sheikh, *bid'ah* which constitutes *kufr* may include:

1. The *bid'ah* of the *Jahamiyyah*, who denied the attributes of Allah.

2. The notion that the *Qur'an* was created
3. The notion that some of the attributes of Allah were created
4. The *bid'ah* of the Qadiriyyah who denied the knowledge and actions of Allah
5. The *bid'ah* of the *Mujassimah* who likened Allah to His creation etc.

Despite this clear explanation, scholars still frown at tagging specific Muslim *kafir*. It is better to say "whoever does or say so and so is a *kafir*" instead of looking at a fellow brother or sister and say to him or her: "you are a *kafir*". The danger of making *takfeer* of someone who is not a *kafir* in the sight of Allah is that the *kufr* would fall back on the person who accused his fellow Muslim wrongly.

Similarly on the position of *book haram* boycotting the people of *bid'ah*, extreme care should be taking not to forsake a brother or sister in Islam along the line. One must know what he is doing in order not to fall into errors. On this many among the *boko haram* forsake their parents, family members and friends on the ground that they are practicing *bidi'ah* or they are part of Kufr system of government which practice secularism. Some people have even left the environment they are familiar with based on the same ground. Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen said:

With regard to boycotting the people of *Bid'ah*, that depends upon the *bid'ah*. If it is a *bid'ah* which constitutes *kufr*, then it is obligatory to boycott the person who does it. If it is of a lesser degree than that, then it is essential to examine the situation further. If something may be achieved by boycotting the person, then we do it; if no purpose will be served by it, or if it will only make him more disobedient and arrogant, then we should avoid doing that, because whatever serves no purpose, it is better not to do it. And also in principle it is *haram* to boycott a believer, because the Prophet (SAW) said: 'It is not permissible for a man to forsake (not speak to) his brother for more than three days" (Majmu' Fataawah Ibn 'Uthaymeen , vol. 2, p. 293)

Conclusion

Boko haram is one of the extremist group that started its activities in the northeastern Nigeria under the leadership of Muhammad Yusuf in 2002. The idea behind the formation was initially to preach against the western system of doing things. The activities of this group later took another dimension because of the influence and conspiracy of western world.

The activities of this group really impacted negatively on the *da'wah* activities especially in the north eastern state of Nigeria

Recommendations

Looking at the nature of corrupted ideologies spreads by such deviant groups like *boko haram*, the following recommendations are made:

1. The habits of condemning vast number of Muslims to hell or call massive *takfeer* without clear evidence must be strongly discouraged. This virus is spreading everywhere and proper steps must be taken against those who think they can just make *takfeer* of anyone they like.
2. The intellectuals in the academia and Islamic organizations should intensify their efforts in teaching and sensitizing the Muslims on the danger in the ideologies propagated by *boko haram* group. This can be achieved through organizing seminar, workshops and conferences. Similarly, the different methods and avenues used by Islamic organizations in *da'wah* should also be employed in educating people.
3. The *Ulama* and scholars should be trained to master the genre of new information and communication technology so as to properly and carefully respond to the misinformation about Islam and Muslims spread by such deviant groups and the enemies of Islam.

4. Government at levels should establish offices for religious affairs so as to manage and screen people in *da'wah* field.

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